

Then, as if a sudden thought had struck him, he added, "And you can cure mules and mares, and get much money, and when you go back to Feringhistan you'll be very rich."

In nearly every camp I have an evening "gossip" with the guides and others of the tribesmen, and, in the absence of news from the larger world, have become intensely interested in Bakhtiari life as it is pictured for me in their simple narratives of recent forays, of growing tribal feuds and their causes, of blood feuds, and of bloody fights, arising out of trivial disputes regarding camping-grounds, right of pasture, right to a wounded bird, and things more trivial still. They are savages at heart. They take a pride in bloodshed, though they say they are tired of it and would like to live at peace, and there would be more killing than there is were it not for the aversion which some of them feel to the creation of a blood feud. When they do fight, "the life of a man is as the life of a sheep," as the Persian proverb runs. Mirza says that among themselves their talk is chiefly of guns and fighting. The affairs of the mountains are very interesting, and so is the keen antagonism between the adherents of the Ilkani and those of Isfandiyar Khan.

Sometimes the conversation takes a religious turn. I think I wronged Aziz Khan in an earlier letter. He is in his way much more religious than I thought him. A day or two ago I was asking him his beliefs regarding a future state, which he explained at much length, and

which involve progressive beatitudes of the
spirit through
a course of one hundred years. He laid down
times and
seasons very definitely, and was obviously in
earnest,
when two Magawe men who were standing by
broke in
indignantly, saying, "Aziz Khan, how dare
you speak
thus ? These things belong to" God, the Judge,
He knows,
we don't—we see the spirit fly away to
judgment and
we know no more. God is great, He alone
knows,"